

Three Ways to Think About God

Job's friends: God is transactional.

Job: God isn't fair, but he will redeem.

Elihu: God is holy and near, righteous and merciful.

One of the problems for us really understanding the book of Job is that it has a happy ending. Read **Job 42:10-13**. How does the happy ending make you feel?

The reason the happy ending is a problem is that it seems to confirm the perspective of the **friends** that God is **transactional**, but God himself tells us that perspective is wrong. The truth is that the friends **don't get punished** for their wrongdoing and Job gets blessed **beyond what he deserves**. What do you think of that?

The Final Speech — God

The real climax of the book is not in the happy ending but in God's encounter with Job right before it. These are the points God makes in his speech:

- ☛ **Job 38:2, 4-6**. God has a **plan**.
- ☛ **Job 38:8-11**. God **orders** the universe.
- ☛ **Job 38:16, 21**. God **knows** the whole earth.
- ☛ **Job 38:22-23, 25-27**. God **controls** natural "disasters."
- ☛ **Job 39:1**. God put **wisdom** into the natural world.
- ☛ **Job 40:8-12**. God is the only **judge**.
- ☛ **Job 41:1-5**. Even mindless animals are more **powerful** than man.

The key lesson from God's speech is this.

**God is supremely powerful, wise, and good (far more than I),
and He knows what he's doing, even when I don't.**

Read Job 42:1-6. After all Job's complaining and all his demand for an audience with God to plead his case, how does Job actually respond to God?

What do you think of that?

Job says that letting God be in charge is enough for him. Is it enough for you?

Consider this climactic truth from the book of Job:

God is supremely powerful, wise, and good (far more than I), He knows what he's doing, even when I don't, and that's enough for me.

For you, how satisfying is that as an answer to the problem of human suffering?

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